The Relationship Between Traumatic Life Events and Negative Symptoms of Schizophrenia: The Mediating Role of Cognitive Biases and Difficulty in Emotion Regulation

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the first paragraph, the definition of negative symptoms could be further clarified by distinguishing between primary and secondary negative symptoms. Consider elaborating on how these distinctions impact the interpretation of your study's findings.

The inclusion criteria mention "stabilization of acute symptoms." Clarify how stabilization was assessed and defined to ensure reproducibility and clarity for future studies.

Several scales were adapted (e.g., Positive and Negative Syndromes Scale to a 5-point Likert scale by Ghamari Givi et al., 2010). Discuss how these adaptations might affect the validity and comparability of your findings with studies using the original scales.

For the Trauma History Questionnaire, report the Cronbach's alpha for each subscale in your study, not just the total score. This will provide a clearer picture of the reliability across different types of traumatic events.

Elaborate on why Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was chosen over other statistical methods. Discuss the advantages of SEM in the context of your study's hypotheses and model complexity.

In Table 1, provide a brief interpretation of the mean scores for each variable. This will help readers understand the central tendencies and variability within your sample.

With 81% male participants, discuss how this gender imbalance might influence the generalizability of your findings. Consider conducting gender-based analyses or acknowledging this limitation more prominently.

Authors revised and uploaded the document.

1.2.   Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

While you cite sources up to 2022, incorporating the most recent studies from 2023 could strengthen the relevance of your literature review. For instance, including recent advancements in the treatment of negative symptoms would provide a more comprehensive background.

The transition from discussing negative symptoms to proposing cognitive biases and emotion regulation as mediators could be more explicitly linked. Consider adding a paragraph that builds a theoretical framework connecting these constructs based on existing models.

You mention contradictory findings regarding cognitive biases (Pionke-Ubych et al., 2021). It would be beneficial to discuss these contradictions in more detail and explain how your study addresses or reconciles these inconsistencies.

The use of convenience sampling is noted, but the rationale for selecting this method over others (e.g., random sampling) should be justified. Discuss potential biases introduced by convenience sampling and how they might affect your results.

While you state that 200 participants meet the minimum requirement for SEM, providing a power analysis to justify the sample size in relation to the expected effect sizes would enhance the methodological rigor.

Although you state that skewness and kurtosis are within acceptable ranges, including a brief discussion on the implications of these distributions for your SEM analysis would add depth to your results section.

The indirect effects in Table 2 are significant, but the discussion could benefit from a more detailed explanation of these pathways. Illustrate how each type of traumatic event uniquely contributes to negative symptoms through the mediators.

While Table 3 shows excellent fit indices, briefly discuss any modifications made to the initial model to achieve this fit. Transparency about model adjustments can enhance the credibility of your SEM results.

Authors revised and uploaded the document.

2.   Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.
Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.